GORT UNION.

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 28 April 1871;—

COPY "of CORRESPONDENCE between *Gerald FitzGibbon*, Master in Chancery in *Ireland*, and the Board of Guardians of the Poor Law Union of *Gort*, in the County of *Galway*, together with all REPORTS of the Sanitary and Medical Officers of Gort Union, on the Condition of TENANTS' HOUSES on the ESTATES of MARTIN'S MINORS, now in Chancery."

(Obtained from the Clerk of Gort Union.)

Poor Law Commission Office,
Dublin, 18 May 1871.

R. BANKS,
Chief Clerk.

GORT UNION.

Board Meeting, 8th January 1870.

REPORT from Doctor Nolan, Medical Officer of Gort Dispensary District, dated 7th January 1870, stating that typhoid fever of a severe form is now very prevalent in the village of Skehanagh and parts of the parish of Killarton; the disease has become epidemic, and when he last visited Skehanagh, there were 16 cases under it, and five deaths had already occurred; he urged the removal of the patients to the fever hospital, but his suggestions were not carried out.

The sanitary officer's immediate attention to be called to this subject, and directed to at once visit those villages, and enforce the sanitary precautions of cleansing and white-washing.

Board Meeting, 15th January 1870.

JAMES FORREST, Sanitary Officer, reports that he visited the village of Skehanagh, found it in a very filthy state, houses leaky, and requiring thatch, the people require bedding; there were 19 cases of fever, six deaths having already occurred; sent one person to the workhouse; he noticed all to clean up their streets.

Board Meeting, 22nd January 1870.

THE sanitary officer reports this day, that all the parties ill on last report are recovering; there has been only one new case; he distributed lime to 33 houses, and the medical officer directed him to stop provisional relief in one case.

Meeting of Guardians, 10th September 1870.

THE sanitary officer having reported that many of the houses in the villages of Ballinduff, Ballymarkahaun, Coolfin, and Skehanagh, the estate of Martyns Minors, are in a filthy state, and require whitewashing; they are in want of thatch, and the occupiers in want of bedding:

"Resolved, that a barrel of roach lime be given to every three persons in Ballinduff, Ballymarkahaun, and Coolfin (the estate of Martyns Minors), who are unable to pay for it, that they be ordered to whitewash their houses at once, and that the Master in Chancery be communicated with as to the state of the tenants in those divisions, and what has been done by the board, the Receiver having been ineffectually made acquainted with the state of Skehanagh last year, where fever raged, from which 10 deaths took place.

"That those able to pay be noticed to whitewash, or else be prosecuted immediately."

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Board Meeting, 17th September 1870.

ORDERED, that Dr. Nolan be requested to inspect the sanitary condition of the electoral division of Skehanagh, and report to the board thereon.

Gentlemen, Gort, 24 September 1870.

IN compliance with the request of the board of guardians, expressed at their last meeting, I made a sanitary inspection on the 22nd instant of the several villages comprising the electoral division of Skehanagh.

All the villages presented an almost entire absence of cleanliness; the sewage is very imperfect, and the great majority of the houses present no trace of lime or whitewash, while in many of them the roofs of houses are in a sad state of repair, rain down and leakage being very general.

The absence of lime and want of cleanliness is most marked in the villages of Ballymarkahaun and Coolfin, but the state of repair of the houses seems equally bad through all the villages of the electoral division.

I learned that many of the houses were occupied by under-tenants who had not the means of thatch or repairs at their disposal. Typhoid fever, which prevailed so generally and fatally in this electoral division during the early part of the year, has again appeared (as I have already reported to you) in the village of Ballymarkahaun, and another case has occurred in the village of Skehanagh; as this disease is known to originate and extend itself through the means of polluted sewage, rainfall, and want of cleanliness, it can be readily known how the villages whose condition I have already described have suffered, and are likely to do so from the prevalence of this disease, until the proper steps are taken to place the houses in the several villages in a proper state of cleanliness and repair.

I am, &c.
(signed) *A. O'Kelly Nolan*, F.R.C.S.,
Medical Officer, Gort Dispensary.

The Board of Guardians.

N.B.—During the prevalence of typhoid fever in the early part of the present year, over 30 cases and seven deaths took place in the village of Skehanagh alone.

A copy of the above to be forwarded to Master FitzGibbon, in the cause of Martyns Minors Estate, on which the townlands are situate.

Board Meeting, 12th November 1870.

The following letter was read:—

MARTYNS MINORS.

Sir, Brown Grove, Tuam, 5 November 1870.

I HAVE to call your attention to the annexed ruling of the Master in this matter, which I have to request you will please return me with the reply of the board of guardians.

Yours, &c.
To the Clerk of the Gort Union. (signed) *Thomas Browne.*

(Copy.)

"Let the Receiver call on the guardians to state precisely what they require him to do, and state also the Act of Parliament under which they claim authority to interfere with the property of the minors in this matter, and with the Receiver acting under the Court.

"4 November 1870." (signed) "*G. F. G.*"

MARTYNS (TULLYRA) MINORS.

A copy of Master FitzGibbon's ruling with reference to a letter forwarded by this board to him, having been brought before them, they have to state they did not ground their application upon any Act of Parliament under which they can claim authority to interfere with the property of the minors, their only desire being to alleviate the painful state of things brought under their notice by the medical and sanitary officers of the union, and if the Master and Receiver cannot be influenced by the feelings of humanity which have prompted this board to appeal to them, things must, of course, remain in their present scandalous condition.

Ordered, that a copy of this be sent to the Master, and one also to the Receiver.

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Board Meeting, 19th November 1870.

The following letter was read:—

To the Board of Guardians of the Gort Union.

Office, Four Courts, Dublin,
16 November 1870.

Gentlemen,

I RETURN herewith a document which I have this day received, which has at foot a letter addressed to me by James Slator, Clerk of the Union.

I cannot recognise any right in you to address a document to me commenting on my ruling mentioned in that document, and concluding with a sentence which implies that I cannot be influenced by the feelings of humanity which have prompted your board to appeal to the Receiver and to me in relation to the property of minors who are wards of the Court of Chancery.

I have to inform you, that I do not think it consistent with my official duty to exercise feelings of humanity at the expense of minors whose property is by the Court placed under my official care, without any legal right or authority to incur such expense, and that my refusing to do so until a proper authority was first obtained as expressed in my ruling, does not appear to me a justification for transmitting to me what I am sorry to be obliged to regard as an impertinent communication, which I therefore return.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Gerald FitzGibbon.*

This Board beg to acknowledge the receipt of Master FitzGibbon's communication in the matter of Martyns Minors, and regret that an application made to him in the interest of the suffering poor whose guardians they are, should be regarded by the Lord Chancellor's representative as impertinent, and beg to state that they did not make their application without a precedent furnished by a property similarly circumstanced in this union.

Board Meeting, 26th November 1870.

The following letter was read:—

To the Board of Guardians of the Gort Union.

Gentlemen,

22 November 1870.

I HAVE received your acknowledgment of my letter in the matter of Martyns Minors, by which letter I did not state that I regarded your application made to me in the interest of the suffering poor as impertinent, but that your insinuation that I could not be influenced by the feelings of humanity which had prompted your board to appeal to the Receiver and to me was impertinent, this gratuitous insinuation being the only discoverable object of your communication to me.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Gerald FitzGibbon.*

I certify that the foregoing are true copies of the documents they represent.

James Slator,
Clerk, Gort Union.

Gort, 10 May 1871.

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GORT UNION.

COPY of CORRESPONDENCE between *Gerald Fitz-Gibbon*, Master in Chancery in *Ireland*, and the Board of Guardians of the Poor Law Union of *Gort*, in the County of *Galway*, together with all REPORTS of the Sanitary and Medical Officers of Gort Union, on the Condition of TENANTS' HOUSES on the ESTATES of MARTIN'S MINORS now in Chancery.

(*Dr. Ball.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,*
2 *June* 1871.

261. *Under* 1 *oz.*

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